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Ex-Clerk for C.I.A. Pleads Guilty to 2 Charges

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 12 — A former clerk for the Central Intelligence Agency who is accused of engaging in espionage while she was serving in Ghana pleaded guilty today to two counts of identifying a United States intelligence agent.

The defendant, Sharon M. Scranage, who had been charged in an 18-count indictment, also pleaded not guilty to 16 counts of espionage, conspiracy, unauthorized disclosure of classified information, and further charges of identifying covert agents.

Justice Department officials said that Miss Scranage's attorneys had tried to arrange a plea bargain that would have involved dropping the espionage charges, which carry potential

life sentences, but that the offer was rejected.

Each count of identifying American intelligence agents carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$50,000.

'All This Is Overkill'

Brian P. Gettings, the attorney for Miss Scranage, said in a telephone interview after the hearing today: "We've essentially thrown ourselves to the mercy of the court. I've got to get across that all this is overkill."

He said the defense would question whether the actions Miss Scranage admitted to in interviews with Federal investigators constitute espionage or conspiracy as described in the relevant statutes.

"She did what she said she did, but whether that adds up to espionage is an open question," said Mr. Gettings.

In Federal District Court in Alexandria, Va., today, Justin W. Williams, an Assistant United States Attorney, read a statement of the case that the Government was prepared to make against Miss Scranage on the two counts to which she pleaded guilty.

Mr. Williams said that Miss Scranage began dating a man in Ghana, Michael Agbotui Soussoudis, in May 1983. By the end of the month, he said, "they became lovers." Mr. Soussoudis, United States Government officials have said, is a relative of Flight Lieut. Jerry J. Rawlings, the Ghanaian leader.

In December 1983, said Mr. Williams, Miss Scranage disclosed to Mr. Soussoudis the identity of a covert agent working for the C.I.A. in Ghana. He was described in court papers only as "John Doe No. 1."

Miss Scranage revealed his identity, according to Mr. Williams, after she had a "confrontation and argument" with Mr. Soussoudis at her home.

She told Mr. Soussoudis of the agent's relatives and residence, Mr. Williams said. He said she also told Mr. Soussoudis that she had seen the C.I.A. chief of station meet with the covert agent at her home.

Within a month, he said, Miss Scranage revealed the identity of "John Doe Number Two" by providing a "partial name" and a "title."

Mr. Williams said Mr. Soussoudis assured her "there was no need for her to worry."

Miss Scranage continued the affair "clandestinely" with Mr. Soussoudis after her supervisors in the C.I.A. had told her to stop seeing him, Mr. Williams said.

In the indictment, the Government charged Miss Scranage with revealing the names of nine other Ghanaians working covertly for the C.I.A.

An affidavit, filed by an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said Miss Scranage admitted providing information about the C.I.A.'s radio communications and acknowledged passing on a classified intelligence report about military equipment that a Ghanaian group had requested from Libya.

The affidavit said Miss Scranage was asked by a Ghanaian security official to provide the identities of three Ghanaians traveling abroad who had delivered information to the C.I.A.

Mr. Soussoudis appeared in court today. He pleaded not guilty to an eight-count indictment on espionage and related charges.

Mr. Williams said Miss Scranage arrived at the C.I.A. station in Accra, the capital of Ghana, in May 1983. It was her first overseas assignment.

As an operations support assistant, she had a security clearance of "top secret" and had access to the files in the station in which the C.I.A. kept the identities of its operatives, Mr. Williams said.

Her duties, he added, included typing intelligence reports and cables. Mr. Williams said she was also involved in accounting and "logistics."